day-to-day basis. There are many issues, Sir. We have a society which is composite in nature. We have men and women. We have the question of gender discrimination which we are facing in this country. For sixty years, we have been striving to become a super-power. Girls die before they come out of their mothers' womb. We have female foeticide in this country. There is the question of women empowerment or social justice. How long can it be like that? So, these are the fundamental issues on which we have to have a national consensus. Some intention is definitely there, though only in patches. But the self-critical manner, in which the whole approach should have been there to set out national direction for rallying the entire people in the present point of time, is missing. With that, I would like to conclude. My other colleagues will now deal with other aspects. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Outbreak of Avian Influenza in Navapur Village in District Nandurbar, Maharashtra and Outbreak of Avian Influenza Virus (H5n1)

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): Sir, large scale death of poultry had been reported from navapur Taluka of District Nandurbar, Maharashtra. Preliminary investigations had indicated the possibility of Newcastle (Ranikhet) disease. Samples were also sent to High Security Animal Disease Laboratory (HSADL), Bhopal, to test for Avian Influenza.

The samples have since been tested at High Security Animal Disease Laboratory, Bhopal. Test reports confirm that samples are positive for H5N1 strain of Avian Influenza in poultry at Navapur, District Nandurbar, Maharashtra.

A series of strategic actions have been initiated immediately on confirmation of Avian Influenza.

[THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

These actions include declaration of infected and surveillance areas, absolute ban on movement of poultry or its products in infected areas, closure of poultry and egg markets and shops in infected areas,

5.00 P.M.

destruction of attected poultry followed by proper disposal, etc. The Government of India has rushed to Maharashtra vaccines for poultry, Tamiflu for humans and personal protective equipment. Rapid Response Teams of the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare have been rushed to the affected areas. The teams of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare are carrying out surveillance of human population in the area.

It is the policy of the Government to compensate for loss of poultry on account of culling and destruction of birds. The Government of India will share costs of compensation on 50:50 basis with the State Governments. The present outbreak is localised to a lomited area of Navapur Taluka of Nandurbar District in Maharashtra, not in the entire Maharashtra. The containment operations will extend to cover some poultry in adjoining areas of Uchchhal Tehsil of Surat district in Gujarat

State also. I would like to point out that as per the WHO recommendations, poultry nd poultry products can be safely consumed if cooked at 70 degree Celsius in all parts of the food.

I would like to assure the House and the public that there is no cause for panic. The Government is keeping a close watch on the situation. Other States have lso been alerted to remain vigilant. Thank You

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, statement by the Minister of Health and Family Welfare. As both the statements are on the same subject, clarifications will be taken up together.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): Sir, the World Health Organisation (WHO) had issued an alert that Bird Flue could spread to other countries including India after an outbreak of Avian Influenza Virus (H5N1) was first detected in the Republic of Korea in December, 2003.

First, I would like to inform the House about our preparedness in this regard. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, took adequate measures to contain the human cases of Avian Influenza if it is to happen. A Joint Monitoring Group was set up on 27th January, 2004, under the chairmanship of the Director General of Health Services,

which is reviewing the situation regularly. A National Consultation Meeting on Pandemic Preparedness was taken by me on 1st August, 2005, with all stakeholders to discuss the Influenza Pandemic Preparedness and Response Plan and after subsequent reviews, decision was taken for instituting interventions in a phased manner.

Chief Secretaries of all States/Union Territories and Secretary, Department of Animal Husbandry were requested to keep a close watch on fatality among bird population, especially poultry and appearance of severe respiratory illness in the exposed human population and to inform any such occurrence to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Other Ministries like Home, Shipping, External Affairs, Environment and forests were also alerted.

A contingency plan to manage human cases of Avian Influenza was prepared and circulated to all the States. A model State action plan was prepared and discussed with State Health Secretaries. The National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD), Delhi, has been identified as the nodal agency to investigate any suspected cases/outbreaks. National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, was also identified for laboratory support. Rapid response teams were constituted and kept in readiness. Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) strengthened Influenza surveillance network.

A task force under the chairmanship of Secretary (H&FW) was constituted to ensure availability of drugs and vaccines for management of Avian Influenza in the country. This task force decided to procure one lakh courses of Oseltamivir (Tamiflu). Fifty thousand courses of Oseltamavir and 10,000 personal protective equipments were stockpiled.

NICD trained State level rapid response teams and held sensitisation workshops for para-military forces. In fact, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) strategies have also been finalised.

Now, I would like to tell our response to the information of this virus. Information was received from the Department of Animal Husbandry about large-scale mortality in poultry from Navapur taluk, Nandurbar District of Maharashtra on 15th February, 2006. Preliminary reports had revealed the possibility of New Castle (Ranikhet) disease. Further, the test reports of some samples from affected poultry were confirmed as positive for H_5N_1 strain of Avian Influenza on 18th February, 2006.

However, as a matter of abundant caution and without waiting for confirmation from High Security Aanimal Disease Laboratory (HSADL), Bhopal, Rapid Response Team (RRT) of NICD was deputed to Navapur, Maharashtra, on 16th February, 2006, itself with all the necessary medicines and equipments. The team is presently surveying the area to identify the people who may have come in contact with the infected birds.

On 17th February, the RRT visited the local hospitals and observed that over the last 10 days, there was no patient with common flu symptoms. However, subsequently, six persons with symptoms of common cold were detected and are under observation. None of these cases has any pneumonia. The teams are in the field and assisting the State health authorities in carrying out active surveillance (house-to-house search) to identify suspected cases among contacts of infected poultry. In order to make confirmatory tests, the RRT has obtained clinical samples randomly from the bird handlers and sent to NIV, Pune, and NICD, Delhi. The samples are being tested as per protocols. Another RRT has been sent to Surat District, Gujarat on 19th February, 2006.

The Navapur sub-district hospital has been strengthened. Isolation beds have been created and dedicated staff identified for treating cases. Four ventilators have reached Navapur along with two anaesthetists.

On 19th February, 2006, the Department of Animal Husbandry has started culling the birds as per their contingency plan. The RRT sensitised the cullers on proper use of personal protective equipments and self care. Health status of cullers is being monitored.

My Ministry has dispatched 11,000 doses of Tamiflue and 3000 sets of Personal Protective Equipments to Maharashtra and Gujarat besides meeting the immediate requirement of Department of Animal Husbandry and is in constant touch with the State health authorities of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Cabinet Secretary has also been reviewing the situation on regular basis.

Round- the-clock control room is functioning from Emergency medical Relief Division, Directorate General of Health Services (Tel. No. 23061302; FAX: 23061457) and from National Institute of Communicable Diseases, 22, Sham Nath Marg (Tel. No: 23921401; FAX 23913028).

As on date, there is no confirmed case of human Avian Influenza. I would like to assure the House that the situation is being closely monitored and under control.

श्री उपसभापति: श्री मूल चन्द मीणा। आप दोनों का पूछ लीजिए because you have given your name for asking clarifications on both these statements.

श्री मूल चन्द मीणा (राजस्थान): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं महाराष्ट्र के नन्दूबार के नबाबपुर ताल्लुका में बड़ी संख्या में कुकुट पक्षियों के मरने के कारण जिस बीमारी का भय हुआ उसके संबंध में स्वास्थ्य मंत्री जी जवाब दे रहे थे कि इसकी निगरानी के लिए 16 जनवरी को हमने पहले ही ऐसी टॉस्क फोर्स बना दी थी। तो क्या मंत्री जी, आपको इस बीमारी का पहले से अंदेशा था। जबकि 15 फरवरी को इस बीमारी का पता चला तो 16 जनवरी को टॉस्क फोर्स बनाने का क्या परिणाम निकला, क्या स्थिति हुई कि इससे पहले भी आपको पता लग सकता था, इस बारे में? यह महामारी दूसरे एरिया में नहीं पहुंच जाए, क्योंकि पड़ौस के एरिया में फैलने का अंदेशा है तो इसको रोकने के लिए आपके विभाग द्वारा क्या कार्रवाई की जा रही है। आपने सेक्रेटरी स्तर पर एक कमेटी का गठन किया इसके लिए मैं आपको धन्यवाद देना चाहूंगा कि जब आपको पता चला तो आपने 16 तारीख को डाक्टरों की एक टीम भेजी, उसने जाकर निरीक्षण किया। तो कुछ लोगों को जुकाम की बीमारी जरूर पाई गई थी, निमोनिया की बीमारी नहीं पाई गई थी। लेकिन धीरे-धीरे अब यह बीमारी बढ़ती जा रही है, फैलती जा रही है। इसको तत्काल रोकने के लिए क्या कदम उठा रहे हैं यह थोड़ा बतला दें? साथ ही महाराष्ट्र में ही नहीं, लेकिन देश के और भागों के अंदर इन पक्षियों के अंदर इस बीमारी के गुण अगर कहीं पाए जाएं तो क्या प्रयोगशाला में भेजकर इसकी जांच कराएंगे? यह मैं जानना चाहता हूं।

SHRI ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, I have clearly stated in my statement....(*Interruptions)*

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Sir, the hon. Minister can answer after all the clarifications. (*Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That will also help because repetition...(*Interruptions)* अगर सब बोल देंगे तो नोट करके जवाब दे सकते हैं।

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, the Avian Influenza, that is, bird flue, has been a global phenomenon. In China, it was detected; in Philippines and other Asian countries, it was detected long back and several reports have come in. he Government of India also took note of it as the hon. Health Minister was explaining the steps taken by them. Sir, according to

the hon. Health Minister and the hon. Agriculture Minister, they found the Avian flu in the poultry, and, there has been no detection as far as human beings are concerned.

Sir, the World health organization is very much concerned about it and they have also allocated funds for curing this deadly disease. The Government of India alerted all the States and they have taken all possible steps but, still, we have to find out the root cause. They were able to identify the poultry in Nandurbar with the N_5N_1 virus, which has been noted "by the hon. Minister. How were they able to identify that? When they identified this in a particular bird, how it infected a particular region? I would like to know whether it was carried by somebody else from abroad. That should be investigated. That is the basic thing which we would like to find out, because the people of this country should know how the poultry from that particular region alone got infected. That is number one.

Number two, having the control room in Delhi alone is not going to help. Our system is, have the control room in Delhi and they do not constitute it in the States where it is affecting. They should coordinate in Maharashtra also. There should a monitoring agency in every State. Let us forget the setting up of control room in Delhi alone and forget other States. There should be a monitoring agency to find out and immediately act upon these things. These are the two points on which I would like to have clarifications.

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, in spite of the denial by the Government and the machinery about the bird flu in the country for the past few weeks, the report from the National Animal Disease Laboratory made it crystal clear that India is hit by the N_5N_1 pathogen, Bird Flu, in poultry birds and it began its journey from Nandurbar.

Sir, my first question to the hon. Minister is: Why the National Egg Coordination Committee, till today, in spite of the National Animal Disease Laboratory's confirmation, is rejecting that the birds are infected with bird flu and died only due to Ranikhet disease? What is the reasoning behind this?

Sir, the second point which I would like to make is this. Though, it is, in a way, established now that this deadly disease is transmitted through

migratory birds, there are also other reasons behind this. The reasons are that last time when 40-50,000 birds died in Nandurbar district, the poultry farm owners discarded the carcasses in the field, started hiding the birds in grain containers and were transporting them out of that area. They also burnt the diseased birds in open and they have not taken any bio-safety measures to stop spread of this disease. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what protective bio-measures he is taking to quarantine the entire affected area.

The next point I would like to know from the hon. Minister is: What are the international guidelines and how are they implemented on ground in the Nandurbar?

There is also apprehension in the State of Andhra Pradesh about bird flu because the State is already suffering from other viral diseases. So, I would like to know whether any samples from Andhra Pradesh sent to the National Animal Disease Laboratory for detection of bird flue in Andhra Pradesh. If yes, what is the outcome of these tests?

Sir, the final point that I would like to know is whether ducks and turkeys are also affected. If yes, how is the Government machinery trying to deal with them? Thank you, Sir.

SHRI SHARAD ANANTRAO JOSHI (Maharashtra): Thank you, Sir, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to seek clarifications on three points. Number one, the statements of either Minister do not specify the incidence of the affliction separately for layers and broilers. It is not known to what extent broilers are affected and to what extent layers are affected. Number two, there is some confusion caused in the public mind because of the statement made by Mrs. Desai, who is the President of the Egg Coordination Committee that the disease does not exist. And, she has, in fact, asked the Government to have a test carried out in an independent foreign laboratory. That is causing some confusion. And, if this confusion persists, I am afraid, flue may spread even to human beings during the interval. And, the third question, that is the most important, is, how far is it safe? The statement says that if it is boiled up to 70°C, then, it is safe. But, to my knowledge, no egg is consumed, unless it is taken to 70°C; nor is any chicken used unless it gets, at least, to 70°C. What the Minister is trying to say is eating the affected chicken is safe, because there is no food of chicken which is used unless it is taken to 70°C.

Cooking at 70°C is nothing at all. Now, the most important question is about the food safety. There is a Food Safety and Standards Bill which is being examined by the Standing Committee on Agriculture, and one of the suggestions, which all of us unanimously made, is that this is not the matter for the Food Processing Ministry; it is the matter for the Health Ministry. Now this particular contingency has one good effect. We find that the people who are rushing in are the Health Minister and the Minister for Agriculture. This is a case where a food item has become dangerous to health. If that is so, then the question arises whether in future it is correct to leave the questions of food safety and standards to the Food Processing Ministry, and, if we could not be more correct, to leave them to the Ministry for Health which could take care of the food safety as also the drug safety standards. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI N. JOTHI (Tamil Nadu): Sir, the danger has come. The warning given by the Asian countries has not been well taken. No preventive measures have been taken so far. So, it has come and reached the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra. Sir, very soon, it will be in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. It will not be difficult for it to reach there. We can very well presume that. Tamil Nadu has got lot of poultry in Salem district, Karur district, especially in Narmakkal area. It supplies to the whole of South India. Sir, the danger is now there and lot of birds will perish. Sir, it will have a devastating effect. This ratio of 50:50 as suggested by the Agriculture Ministry wherein the State Government will share fifty per cent and the Central Government will Share fifty per cent is not workable. The State Governments, especially Tamil Nadu, have seen tsunami and have already suffered from floods. We are not in a position to bear this fifty per cent burden for the mistakes committed by the Central Government by not taking preventive steps. Sir, it should be at least in the ratio of 80:20. The Central Government should bear the burden of 80 per cent and 20 per cent alone by the State Government. For that too, payments should be given in advance. Will the Central Government seriously consider this? Sir, they have not satisfied us either on tsunami or on flood relief. At least, on this count, will they act fast before the influenza could reach the States of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh?

PROF. P.J. KURIAN (Kerala): Sir, this is like tsunami.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please, don't repeat those points which other hon. Members have already raised. If there is any fresh point, kindly ask.

PROF. P.J. KURIAN: Sir, my first point is this. It should be seen as calamity, and the sharing of 50:50 should be revised. That is my first point.

Second, I would like to know whether the Government has investigated as to how this disease has come in this particular district of Maharashtra. What is the reason behind it? Is there any investigation conducted upon that? If so, I would like to know.

My third point is that the statement says that the National Institute of Virology, Pune, has also identified for laboratory support. Is it that laboratory support is not available in any other State? If the disease spreads in Tamil Nadu, Kerala or in any other State, where is the laboratory support?

My next point is that it is said that by cooking at 70°C, the poultry product can be safely used. But the whole problem is that if we heat it at this much of temperature, it will be heated from out side only. For example, you prepare chicken or egg by heating at 70°C or even at 100°C. Even if you boil an egg. The water boils at 100°C but the inside of the egg, that is yolk, will not reach the temperature of 100°C. It will take much more time. I am afraid that the statement is misleading.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That point has already been raised. You will get the answer. You come to the next point. That point has been covered.

PROF. P.J. KURIAN: I think it is misleading.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Other Members have covered it. Cover new points. There is no point in repeating it.

श्री एस॰ एस॰ अहलुवालिया (झारखंड): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से सिर्फ इतना ही जानना चाहूंगा कि poultry farms के birds को जहां पर इन्होंने सस्पैक्ट किया है कि बर्ड फ्लू हुआ है, उसके डिस्पोज़ल के लिए जो रास्ते अपनाए हैं, जब विदेश में ये घटनाएं घटीं, तो विदेश में देखा गया कि उन्होंने उनको जलाकर इसका डिस्पोजल किया, पर हमारे यहां कल से जो टी॰वी॰ पर दिखाया जा रहा है कि उनको गड्ढे में डाला जा रहा है, उनको दफनाया जा रहा

है, दफनाने से हमें भय है कि कल को ये हमारे अंडरग्राउंड वाटर साइकिल में मिल सकता है। तो क्या आने वाले दिनों में यह हमारे वाटर को infect कर सकता है? दूसरी बात है कि जब दफना कर छोड़ देते हैं, जिस तरह से लोग गड़े मुर्दे उखाड़ कर ले जाते हैं, इसी तरह गरीब लोग जिनको खाना नहीं मिलता, वे लोग लाखों की तादाद में जो मुर्गे गाड़ दिए गए या चिकन गाड़ दिए गए, ये लोग उनको उखाड़ कर ले जाएंगे और ले जाकर वे खाएंगे और फिर वे मरेंगे, एक नया epidemic आएगा। तो इसको जला देने में भलाई ज्यादा है कि उसको जलाकर खत्म किया जाए, ताकि वह पूरी तरह से खत्म हो सके। Convert in into ashes.

महोदय, दूसरा महहे के बारे में लोगों के मन में एक भ्रम पैदा हो गया है कि eggs में इसका infection है या नहीं। जिस poultry farm से eggs ऑलरेडी ट्रांसपोर्ट हुए हैं और उस poultry farm के सारे birds आने डिस्पोज़ ऑफ कर दिए हैं, उन eggs के बारे में साइंसदानों और डाक्टरों की क्या राय है? उनकी रिपोर्ट क्या कहती है कि क्या वे eggs प्रयोग में लाए जा सकते हैं या नहीं लाए जा सकते, उसके बारे में भी बताएं।

तीसरी बात है कि यूरोप में जब mad-cow disease चली थी, तो अंतत: जो रिपोर्ट आई थी इनक्वायरी कमीशन की, उसमें कहा गया था कि जो इनको फूड दिया जाता है, उनको एक stunning disease हो जाती है। जिस वक्त slaughter house में दो गायों या जानवरों को ले जाते हैं, तो जब पहली कटती है तो दूसरी को जो stunning होती है, उसके बाद उसकी बॉडी केमिस्ट्री चेंज हो जाती है, जिसके कारण उसके शरीर के अंदर बहुत सारी चीजें उभरकर आती हैं। उसकी अंतड़ियों का poultry feed बनाया जाता है या गाय को जो खाना खिलाया जाता था या जानवरों को जो खाना खिलाया जाता था, उसे उस खाने में मिलाया जाता है जिससे कि ज्यादा से ज्यादा मांस उसमें पैदा हो सके, वह ज्यादा से ज्यादा मोटा हो सके, इसलिए उस फीड में मिलाया जाता है। इसी तरह poultry feed में नॉन-वेजिटेरियन ऐलिमेंट्स मिलाए जाते हैं, तो क्या ये infection उसके माध्यम से आ सकता है, इस आगाह करने की जरूरत है, धन्यवाद।

श्री जय प्रकाश अग्रवाल (राष्ट्रीय राजधानी क्षेत्र, दिल्ली): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि जब 2003 में इस बीमारी की दहशत फैली थी, तो उस समय सारी दुनिया हिल गई थी और साल में भी यह बीमारी रूकी नहीं थी। बराबर इसकी कभी न कभी आवाज आती रहती थी कि वहां फैला, यहां फैला। हिन्दुस्ताान और खासकर दिल्ली इसका बहुत बड़ा मार्केट है। यहां से कंजम्प्शन भी है, दिल्ली से बाहर भी माल भेजा जाता है और एक्सपोर्ट बहुत होता है। तकरीबन एक हज़ार करोड़ का एक्सपोर्ट है, जिस पर इसका बहुत बड़ा इफैक्ट होने वाला है। तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि कौन सी ऐसी एजेंसी है दिल्ली में, जो इस पर चैक रख रही थी पिछले दो सालों में? अगर यह दिल्ली में फैला, तो सिर्फ दिल्ली में ही नहीं, इसके

आस-पास भी बहुत लोग मरने वाले हैं। आज की तारीख में भी किसी को यह नहीं मालूम है कि कौन इसको चैक करेगा और कौन इसका ध्यान रखेगा और किसकी जिम्मेदारी थी यह? मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यही जानना चाहता हूं।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Dr. Malaisamy. Please seek new clarifications.

DR. K. MALAISAMY (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I am inclined to make only three very small points for clarifications. Sir, for this kind of problems, there are two processes—preventive and curative. I would like to ask: What is the major thrust now? Secondly, when we are inclined to welcome and appreciate the efforts made by the two Ministers, I am inclined to ask whether the steps or the measures so far taken according to them are comprehensive, adequate and effective—I repeat, comprehensive, adequate and effective. Sir, I join with other Members in seeking a clarification, whether there is any chance of this Avian flu likely to spread in parts of the South. Can you root it out once and for all by making extra efforts on that? Thank you.

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज (उत्तरांचल): उपसभापति जी, जैसा कि आपने कहा है कि कोई न्यू प्वाइंट हो तो बोलो, मैं केवल दो प्वाइंट्स ही लूंगी और दोनों ही नए प्वाइंट्स बोलूंगी तथा अपने अनुभव से बोलूंगी। उपसभापति जी, मैं जिस समय स्वास्थ्य मंत्री थी, मैंने इस तरह की दो चुनौतियों का सामना किया था, एक सार्स का और एक बर्ड-फ्लू का। मुझे यह कहते हुए खुशी है कि मैंने उनका सफलतापूर्वक सामना किया था। इसलिए मंत्री जी, मैं आने अनुभव से ही बात कहना चाहती हूं कि मेरे अनुभव में यह आया कि जब भी इस तरह का संकट आता है तो बीमारी से ज्यादा अफवाह से लोग मरते हैं। एक पैनिक क्रिएट होता है और उस पैनिक के कारण अफरा-तफरी फैल जाती है। इसलिए जहां हम एक ओर बीमारी को रोकने का उपाय करें, वहीं पर हमारे लिए उतना ही जरूरी अफरा-तफरी को रोकना भी है। हम लोगों ने उसका एक मैकेनिज्म तैयार किया था। आपने लिखा है कि IEC strategies have been finalised. मुझे नहीं मालूम कि आपने क्या strategies बनाई है? लेकिन मुझे एक बात यह कहनी है कि इस पैनिक को रोकने के लिए डेली मीडिया ब्रीफिंग बहुत जरूरी है और निश्चित समय पर डेली मीडिया ब्रीफिंग हो। लोगों ने एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्ट्री से सीनियर आफिसर लिया था और एक हैल्थ मिनिस्ट्री का सीनियर आफिसर उसमें बैठता था। हमने पांच बजे का समय दे रखा था कि दोनों बीट के कोर्सपोंडट्स, यानी एग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्ट्री की बीट के कोर्सपोंडट्स और हैल्थ मिनिस्ट्री के कोर्सपोंडेंस यहां पांच बजे आएंगे और हमसे पूरे दिन की जानकारी लेंगे। हम रोज बताते थे कि इतनी मुर्गियां मर गईं और कोई ऐसा एवियन फ्लू अभी नहीं आया है जोकि अभी

मर्दों या पुरुषों तक नहीं आ पाया है, इंसानों तक नहीं आ पाया है। जब उनको एक-एक चीज की जानकारी सही रास्ते से मिल जाती है तो फिर वे अटकलें नहीं लगाते, फिर वे अंदाजों के आधार पर खबरें नहीं देते। इसलिए यह पहला, मेरा सुझाव भी है और मैं यह पूछ भी रही हूं, अगर आपने ऐसा मैकेनिज्म बना दिया है तो सही है, नहीं तो आप एक मैकेनिज्म ऐसा जरूर बना लें, जहां एक ज्वाइंट ब्रीफिंग दोनों मिनिस्ट्री की तरफ से, एक निश्चित समय पर मीडिया को बुलाकर कर दी जाए, ताकि अगले दिन वही खबर छपे, अटकलों और अंदाजों पर न छपे। मुझे दूसरी बात यह कहनी है कि अच्छी प्लानिंग की पूर्व शर्त है, एन्टीसिपेट करके प्लानिंग करना। आज आपने यह कहा कि यह अभी इंसानों तक नहीं आया है, लेकिन चूंकि लंदन और यूरोप में यह बहुत बड़ा फ्लू आया था और यह वहां पर इंसानों पर आया था, तो यदि यहां एक भी ऐसा व्यक्ति आ गया, तो वह उस फ्लू, उस वॉयरस को यहां ला सकता है। उसमें आपको लोगों को कॉरन-टाइन करना पड़ सकता है। आपने नवापुर में तो कहा है कि Isiolated beds have been created. लेकिन आपने इसका कोई जिक्र नहीं किया है कि आपने कॉरन टाइन का कोई प्रावधान या प्रोविजन किया है या नहीं। बड़े मैट्रो सीटीज़ में जहां पर बाहर से लोग आते हैं, जैसे मुम्बई एयरपोर्ट है, दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट है और कोलकाता एयरपोर्ट है, यहां पर कुछ अस्पतालों में आपको कॉरन-टाइन की व्यवस्था पहले से कर लेनी चाहिए। जब व्यक्ति आ जाता है और उसको कॉरन-टाइन करने की जगह नहीं मिलती तो फिर ज्यादा परेशानी पैदा होती है। मैं ये दोनों बातें, अपने अनुभव के आधार पर आपके सामने रख रही हूं। जैसा मैंने कहा है कि मैंने सफलतापूर्वक सामना किया था। उसमें इन दोनों बातों का बहुत बड़ा योगदान था। अगर आपने कर लिया है तो बता दें, अगर नहीं किया है तो कर लें। बस इतना ही मुझे कहना है।

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what the main reason for this influenza is. This is a disease which comes from other countries. This disease is not normally found in our country. What is the Government of India's assessment with regard to the quarantine issue, the problems related to it? This deadly disease is nothing but an imported disease. Does the import of food items from foreign countries have any connection with this disease? Secondly, as I understand, there were many reports according to which many scientists objected to the import of certain food items, which could cause this type of problems. So, is there any such case? Number two. Sir, our Minister has said many things about the Rapid Response Teams and all that. In the State of Andhra Pradesh, there are no doctors in 60 per cent of its hospitals; all the posts are vacant. How can those Rapid Response Teams work without any personnel?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Who will reply first?

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Sir, the Agriculture Minister should reply first.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, I appreciate the concerns of the hon. Members, and these concerns are expressed not only within the House but also in the entire country. Today, there is a situation of panic where people feel that this may go out of control or beyond control, and that from the birds it may spread even to humans. Sir, I have already mentioned about the state of preparedness which we have made. This preparedness has been there for the last one-and-a-half years, even much before this Virus has come to this part of the world, and much before when this Virus was limited to Korea, Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, and to China recently. I had personally held more than four meetings involving international bodies like the WHO, the UN, the representiatives of the Animal Husbandry Ministry and the Environment Ministry, a lot of experts, scientists, even the personnel of Indian industries which have greater manufacturing capacity of vaccines, and also the drug manufactures. So, a lot of meetings have been taking place. Not only that; my officers have also held a lot of meetings all these years. For the last one-and-a-half years, they have been going on. A Committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Director-General of Health Services. Literally every fifteen days, they used to go and find out whether there had been any such cases all around the country. They tried to get information. Of course, the Secretary, Health, Mr. Hota has been actually having a couple of meetings with various personnel, with this counterparts in the Animal Husbandry Ministry and the Environment Ministry, and also with the representatives of other Ministries like the Civil Aviation, Surface Transport. About eight to nine months ago, the Cabinet Secretary had started having meetings. Literally, every fifteen days, he was holding meetings. Sir, I would say that we in the Central Government are not only making efforts to prepare for such an eventuality but we have also issued notifications, circulars to all the State Governments in this regard. The officials had held meetings with the State Chief Secretaries regarding the issue of preparedness in case there is an outbreak.

Finally, Sir, unfortunately, there has been recently an outbreak. There were some contradictory words used. Some of the Members feel that

this may not be an H5N1 Virus. Whatever it is, we feel that it has occurred through our lapse. In Bhopal, we have the facility. It is called the BSL-4 lab, i.e. the Bio-Safety Lab, which the Minister for Agriculture will explain to you.

Sir, the hon. Members have raised some relevant issues like what the Government is trying to do and what the future contingency plans are. Mr. Meena has asked about the Task Force set up on the 16th. Sir, we have been preparing for this all these years. We have been drilling that there has to be liaison among the Animal Husbandry Ministry, all sorts of Ministries, the local State Government Officials and the Health Ministry. The Home Minister should be informed. In fact, the Home Minister also held a meeting on disaster management, but that had included all these components.

Sir, when we heard that there were large-scale deaths of birds, we had, in fact, coordinated with the Agriculture Department. But we did not wait for the results to come. Instead, we immediately sent a team to just check it out, preliminarily, what is the problem. And we are trying to go into the issue. This was started by the Rapid Response Team from the NICD (National Institute of Communicable Diseases), Delhi. They are the highest authority for disease surveillance in India. They had gone there and they were trying to coordinate with them. After that, in fact, we got results from the Bhopal labs stating that this was a positive case of H5N1. Some of the samples have been tested on dead birds and we had notified all the formalities which we have gone through all these years, how to go about it, how to quarantine, what are the protective gears we have to supply and the medicines in preparedness, the preparedness of an isolation ward, the preparedness of ventilator support and emergency contingency plans, etc. In fact, in my statement, I have stated all that have been done and what we are trying to do at this point of time to contain the disease in the birds so that it doesn't spread from birds to humans. In fact, I would like to say that the people who have been associated with these poultry farms, the workers have been identified and they have been isolated and blood samples have been taken from all of them. We have taken samples from 91 of them. Half of the samples have been sent to NIV, Pune and half of the samples have been sent to NICD, Delhi. They have been tested. Out of that, 5 or 6 have some symptoms of common cold. They have been under observation. There is

nothing to worry about. If the bird flu virus attacks them, they will ultimately land in pneumania, which is again severe and there will be respiratory distress, which will again be a cause of death. But, as it is, there is no condition to worry about because they are all stable and keeping good health. So, there has not been any human case of H5N1or human avian influenza case.

Mr. Meena wanted to know the steps taken in other areas. In fact, my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, will be explaining to you about the steps that we have taken. We are coordinating with other State Governments and other authorities. We have been coordinating with Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka. In fact, the Home Ministry has issued an advisory to all the State Governments to be in preparedness and to initiate action.

Mr. Narayanasamy wanted to know the root cause. Till date we are not able to identify it. In fact, the hon. Minister of Agriculture was mentioning that. There are different patterns. Here the only pattern could be due to migratory birds. Mr. Madhu has raised an issue whether the food products from other countries could be contaminated. We have banned the import of poultry and poultry products from countries, which have had this bird flu, way back in 2002-03 when such cases arose at that point of time. From no country, which has had this bird flu, poultry products have been imported. So, that is not the source of the disease. The only source could be migratory birds and we will not be able to regulate the migratory birds. In fact, the summer period has started and they will be flying back.

Mr. Narayanasamy wanted to know why the Control Room is only in Delhi. The Control Room is not in Delhi alone. There is one in Mumbai. The telephone numbers are available at the local area, Navapur. These numbers are given to the local people. The local media is responding to these numbers. Every area has got these numbers. The Control Room in Delhi is an Emergency Medical Control Room. If there is any disaster or medical emergency, we will be sounding them and it is our duty to provide these numbers so that anybody calling from any part of the country or the world could get access to or information from these Control Rooms.

Shrimati Durga wanted to know about the National Egg Coordination Committee. The hon. Minister of Agriculture will be answering this issue, the issue regarding the measures of quarantine and other issues.

Currently, we are quarantining the people who are involved in this process. In fact, we have quarantined approximately 16 poultries where there are symptoms and signs of bird flu and deaths have taken place.

As regards international measures, we have been following the WHO protocol of international regulations. Again, the hon. Minister of Agriculture will explain what we should do in the eventuality of an outbreak, how we should cull out these birds and how we should go about in providing vaccine to some of them in the outer areas. The WHO is actually coordinating with the Government in all these areas of preparedness. They are going to coordinate with us in the prevention also. Once this comes, we will be coordinating with them.

As regards any samples from AP, we take samples only where there are mass or a large number of deaths due to reasons not know. Then we take the samples, test them and send a circular. But, I don't see any deaths and in fact, the hon. Minister of Agriculture will be explaining it. Whether ducks or drakes can be infected, he will be explaining. They can be infected. But at this point of time, we do not see any ducks or drakes being infected. Shri Sharad Joshi wanted to know whether eating chicken is safe. Again the hon. Minister of Agriculture would be replying to it. In fact, so far as the food safety laws are concerned, I concur with him. That should be taken up by the Ministry of Health. Food safety is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. Shri Jothi asked about preparatory steps about which I have said that we have gone through one-and-a-half years of preparedness and are sounding the State Governments and institutions associated with this.

So far as compensation is concerned, the hon. Minister of Agriculture will be taking up the issue of compensation. Prof. Kurian talked about NIV lab support to other States. The National Institute of Virology is a bio-safety level 3 plus lab. We have bio-safety level 1, level 2, level 3 and level 4 labs. Bhopal lab is a bio-safety level 4 lab. We have only one bio-safety level 4 lab. These labs are very, very expensive to maintain. It has to be air-conditioned. Atmospherically, there should not be even one microbial content anywhere in the lab. We have to have stringent international practice to mantain the quality of the labs. In fact, the NIV Lab at Pune is a bio-safety level 3 lab. We have one bio safety level 3 lab here in NICB, Delhi also. So it is very difficult. It has to be maintained in a

proper format. This cannot be opened in all the States. There has to be a format. We have the requisite numbers, we have the requisite scientists; we have the requisite material to test the end number of samples. That is not a problem. Shri Ahluwalia was talking about disposing of the culled birds. Again the hon. Minister of Agriculture will be able to explain it. Shri Malaisamy wanted to know whether there are chances of spreading this flu to south. As it is, we do not see that it is going to go out of this region because we have taken a number of steps. In fact, the Government of Maharashtra has acted immediately. We have been in constant touch with the hon. Chief Minister. He has been actively taking keen interest so that its spread could be checked. In fact, the borders of Maharashtra have been sounded that no birds from Maharashtra should be going out of its borders. All the steps have been taken. The hon. former Minister of Health, Shrimati Sushma Swaraj, was asking about daily media briefing. Madam, your suggestion is well taken. We will take up your suggestion. In fact, we will be starting a daily media briefing. We have already started it. In fact, yesterday a joint meeting has taken place between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health. We will be taking up daily briefing to tide over the crisis because we feel that there has been a panicky situation created, fortunately or unfortunately, by the media which has been going out of the way and sensationalising these issues about deaths and eating of chicken. It is a huge industry. Poultry industry is a huge industry. One of the factors of poultry industry is, it is a growing industry. People are apprehensive about eating chicken and all. Naturally, it is our duty to enlighten and educate the people out there. Of course, we have sounded the airports also. We have taken it up with the officials of the Ministry of Surface Trasnport, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Home Affair. We have sounded them that in the eventuality of any cases, quarantine facilities have to be put up at the airports and other places also. Shri Madhu asked about the reasons for this influenza. I have already talked about it. He also wanted to know whether it is connected to food imports. In the face of preparedness—hon. Member Shri Madhu said that there is no doctor in Andhra Pradesh—we are trying to, in fact, have an isolation ward literally like an ICU, where ventilator support, doctor support and anaesthetic support will be there. We already have on in Navapur area. We are trying to have it literally in all the 600 district headquarters hospitals. We are trying to give them protective gear. In the eventuality of a major outbreak,

or if there is an outbreak from birds to humans, we have been preparing these things. We are trying to prepare not only these drugs but all these protective equipments and also putting up ventilator support.

श्री जय प्रकाश अग्रवाल: सर, मैंने आपसे एक सवाल पूछा था कि कौनसी एजेन्सी है, जो इसे चेक कर रही है? दिल्ली में कन्जम्पशन है, दिल्ली से बाहर जाता है, एक्सपोर्ट होता है। कौनसी एजेन्सी दिल्ली में है, जो इसे चेक कर रही है? महोदय, दूसरी बात यह है कि जो मंत्री जी ने कहा, आज के पेपर में एक डॉक्टर का स्टेटमेंट है कि जो माइग्रेटिव बड्र्स हैं, वे तीन महीने पहले आते हैं। अगर यह फैलना होता, तो यह तीन महीने पहले ही माइग्रेटिव बड्र्स से फैलता। अब तो यह उनके जाने का समय है। इस समय थोड़े ही फैलेगा। इस प्रकार, यह कोई और वज़ह है, जिसको इन्हें देखना चाहिए।

DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS: Sir, nobody can control the pattern of migratory birds. Nobody can say whether these migratory birds will be here for three months, or, that they will go back after two-and-a-half months. It is their pattern. Sir, the hon. Minister of Agriculture will take up the other issues. Thank you.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, we got this particular information from a place called Navapur. Navapur is a tribal area. It is near to one major irrigation project called Kukai, and it is also one of the forest areas. And, as my colleague has just now mentioned, this type of disease is always carried by migratory birds; the major reason for it being nearer to the water area and, secondly, it is a forest area. There is every possibility that the birds coming from different parts might have brought this particular disease. But we have not come to any definite conclusion. Knowing about the area from where it has come, I thought I would give a little background.

A mention was made by the hon. Member, Shri Joshi, about an advertisement which has appeared in today's newspapers published by the National AIDS Coordination Committee. Shrimati Arundhati Desai is the Chairperson of this particular organisation. The statement there says, "This is not a bird flu, but this is Ranikhet." Out initial information also was about Ranikhet. But when we sent these samples to a laboratory at Bhopal, which is fully equipped to test for Avian influenza, this laboratory has conducted a series of tests. Experts have analysed the processed used by this laboratory and found them to be credible.Their report is that

the samples are positive for Avian Influenza. This National AIDS Coordination Committee has mentioned the name of a particular expert, Dr. Kataria, who seemed to have said something. But, Dr. Kataria was one of the members who were deputed by the Government of India along with three other persons to visit Bhopal and to study each and every sample. All these four experts have given a written statement to the Government of India saying that they had seen those samples and whatever procedure was adopted by the laboratory was correct, and that these are cases of Avian Influenza. So, whatever the Coordination Committee or Shrimati Desai's statement which appeared on the media, could be a reaction to that, but the factual position is not that. The expert's report is altogether different, and that is the reasons why the Government of India has taken this particular problem very seriously.

The second issue which was raised here is about culling of birds. As per the WHO guidelines, whenever any Government in the world gets any information about this Avian Influenza, it is the responsibility of that local Government to take immediate action, and they have to destroy these birds within practically no time. We had discussed long back how we were going to protect the interests of the farmers, were something like this to happen. That is why a decision was taken that compensation would be paid, fifty per cent of which will come from the Government of India and fifty per cent will be contributed by the State Government. This particular decision was taken with the approval of the State Governments. Whether it was Maharashtra or Tamil nadu, all State Governments had agreed to this decision. It was decided that money will be made available to the State Governments for the payment of compensation to farmers.

The hon. Member, Shri Ahluwalia, has raised the issue as to how we are going to dispose off the birds. जहां तक दफनाने की बात आपने कही, there are two ways; one is of burying and the other is of burning. It has to be ensured that disposal by burning is done in deep trenches; use of plastic sheets is to be done to cover the earth. We have requested the States of use JCBs. They can dig deep trenches. So, these are the types of steps that have been taken in Navapur, as per the WHO guidelines.

A question was asked whether it were broilers or layers. The extent of the death of broilers and layers will be known only finally, after the culling operation concludes. We are not studying whether they were broilers or

layers. We can find out that later. Immediately, our effort is to dispose them off as early as possible. That is why we are taking that action.

A question was asked about the samples from Andhra Pradesh. No sample from Andhra Pradesh has tested positive for avian influenza.

Sushmaji raised an issue, to which my colleague has already replied. This was regarding the media briefing. Daily media briefing is being done by the Department of Animal Husbandry and the Health Ministry. This particular briefing has been started from the 18th.

The Government—whether it is the State Governments or the Government of India—had been taking this particular subject seriously since long. In fact, preparations for fighting this type of a problem had started, practically, four years ago in this country, in the respective State Governments, the Government of India, the Health Ministry and also in the respective Animal Husbandry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture. As my colleague has already mentioned, there were a series of meetings between the States and the Government of India. The entire machinery was put on alert. The Health Ministry was on alert. Then, the Animal Husbandry departments in various States were also on alert. So, we had made all preparations to fight such a problem.

I have an appeal to make, especially to the members of the media. My appeal is that they should not create panic. The truth is that this particular problem has erupted in a very limited area; it has been very localised. It is just in a three-to-ten kilometre area in a place called Navapur. Till today, we have not got any information of its going beyond that three-to-ten kilometre area. That is why we are concentrating on that particular area. We have taken such steps that it does not spread to other parts of the State and the country. So, it is not a problem that has erupted in the entire country. The reports which have appeared in the media, especially in the electronic media, are indicating that this problem seems to be there throughout India. I am sorry this is not a problem that is there throughout India.

The only thing is that one has to take this particular industry very seriously. Sir, this particular industry is practically worth Rs. 35,000 crores. It is not a small industry. It has an annual growth rate of 17 per cent. This is one of the growing industries in the country and it provides a lot of jobs.

More than three million people are already involved in this industry and a majority of them are in the rural areas. That is why it is all the more important that we protect the interests of this industry and the interests of the farming community. If something goes wrong, we will take all possible steps. But we should not create an atmosphere as if the entire industry is affected and as if eating an egg or a chicken is a dangerous thing. That is not the case. As I have already mentioned, as per the WHO guidelines, if we boil an egg or a chicken at 70 degrees, it will not be harmful for anybody. So, those types of guidelines have been communicated by the WHO and we would also like to communicate the same to the entire country.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands ajourned to meet tomorrow at 11.00 a.m.

The House then adjourned at fifty-five minutes past five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Tuesday, the 21st February, 2006.

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